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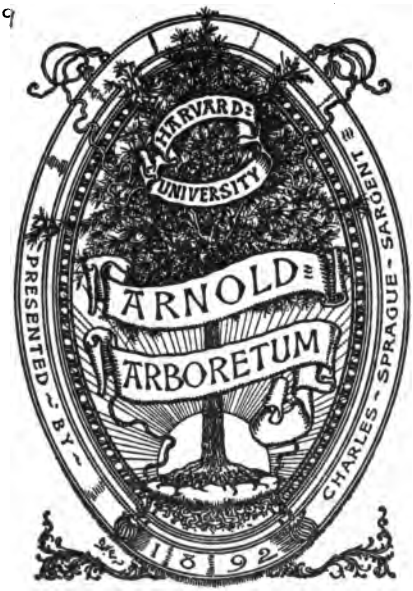

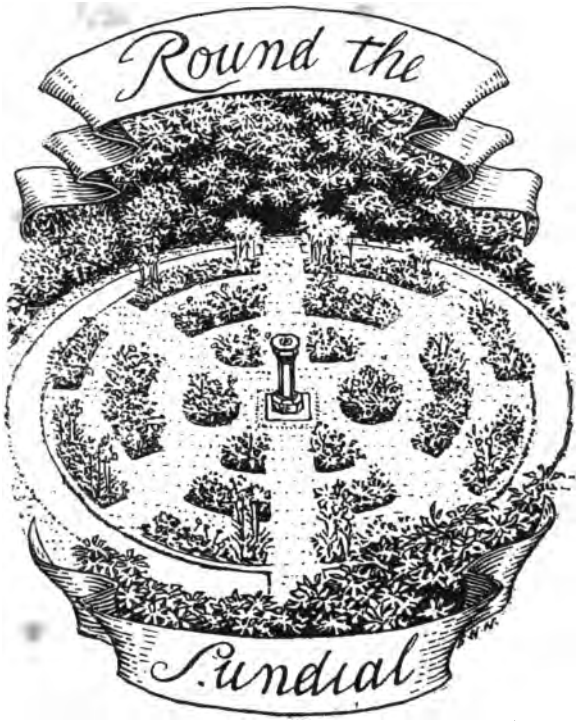
Round the
Sundial

#

MY ROSES

&

HOW I GREW THEM

BY

HELEN MILMAN
(MRS. CALDWELL CROFTON)
AUTHOR OF
"IN THE GARDEN OF PEACE"
&c. &c.

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PREFACE

THIS is only a book for amateurs. Gardeners might scoff at it, experts would doubtless jeer.

But every word in it is the result of experience, and, after all, experience is a first-rate teacher.

When I began gardening I knew nothing . . . . absolutely nothing. And I gloried in my ignorance, because then I could ask advice from every one; and I received it . . . gratis . . . with the result that nothing would grow, because every one's advice differed!

"Plant in the autumn."

"No, plant in the spring."

"Roses require an open space."

"Remember, above all, that roses must have shelter."

"Prune the tea-roses as you prune the hybrids."

"Tea-roses do not stand pruning at all."

Then I sighed, and turned my attention

to books. Some I bought, and some were given me by my friends. They were all very long and difficult to understand, and so technical! I wanted to know exactly what to do and when to do it; it mattered little to me what I was not to do; and the marvellous effect of different chemicals on the ground only bored me.

"Is there no little book, written in plain words?" I asked in a tone of mingled hope and weariness.

But answer there was none.

So now, to my great amusement, after seven years' experience, friends, ay, and strangers too, turn to me and lay the request at *my* feet, if you please! to write a short booklet (how I hate the word!) on Rose-growing.

The request may make some smile, but if all my readers had seen my roses this summer they would pardon my presumption in writing.

Baskets upon baskets I filled; it seemed to me as if I could never stop cutting. My roses carried summer to many hearts, and they seemed to bloom just to return some of the love bestowed upon them.

"We may have to do without many things, but let us at least have perfect roses," I said, and I certainly have got them at last.

Here is another proof of their perfection. Since we grew them we have always taken prizes at the local rose show for tea-roses. We have taken the prize for the best tea-rose bloom in the whole show. And, mind you, we compete with gardens which have five, ten, fifteen gardeners! So this is no vain boast.

We ourselves have one gardener. He has very little experience, and he does the pony too, and all the other hundred-and-one odd jobs about the place, so he gets but a short time for flowers.

He hoes the rose beds, certainly, but I myself do the entire pruning, and caterpillar-squashing, and syringing. Then the owner of the garden does the watering, and so nothing is left for the bushes but to bloom.

I do not want to boast, but you never saw such roses as mine! Or perhaps I ought to be more humble and say you never saw better roses than mine! Such a wealth of bloom, such a glory of colour, and such a long time in blossom!

I think one reason I get so many is that I pick them so freely, and the flowers are glad to carry joy outside the garden, and to show their gladness they form fresh buds for me.

Preface

Tea-roses are my favourites, because they bloom all the summer long. Even to-day, in the middle of November, I can pick you a bonnie bunch. They are so beautiful in bud, and their green is graceful and fine; and, again, they do not suffer in the same way from all the unkind diseases common to rose life.

Yes, you must grow tea-roses, they will repay all your trouble a thousand-fold.

The first year we planted our rosary I thought myself wondrous wise. I sent for a hundred roses (I am not at all sure it was not two hundred) and paid about two or three pounds for the whole lot! I thought the nurseryman would know so much better than I did what I wanted, and that his choice would be far superior to mine. He knew everything, and of course I knew nothing!

Vain delusion! The roses were poor and nameless, and where we thought to gather hundreds, one poor little ill-formed bloom struggled into existence.

Take my advice: if you can only have one bed of roses, at least have them perfect. It is far better and wiser to buy half-a-dozen well-grown, well-known plants, than to buy a big cheap lot for the same money. I have tried both, and so I ought to know.

Preface

I have won many hearts with my roses, but then they grow in the Garden of Peace, and so it is not to be wondered at that they grow well.

Birds sing to them in the rosary, and as they build their nests they rest now and again on the sundial to watch the buds unfolding.

Squirrels look in and wonder why pruning is necessary.

Sometimes a pheasant peeps in at the garden gate to see what all the fuss is about.

In July the Queen of the Roses holds her court. I would bid you come and worship at her shrine.

It is impossible to leave the rosary empty handed. The bushes are covered with bloom, and it is difficult to choose the best, for all are perfect.

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CHAPTER I

ON THE CHOICE OF ROSES

Now for a short history of my plants.

As I said in the Preface, my roses are nearly all tea-roses. They bloom more freely all the summer through, and I think are far more satisfactory than other kinds.

You must make up your list of roses early and send it off in good time. The roses will not be sent to you till the right time for planting—November—and it is a good plan to say, when you order the plants, that you will send a postcard when you are quite ready for the roses to arrive.

Choose a nurseryman, if possible, north of your home. There are so many good ones now that I feel it impossible to advise; but all my own roses came from George Prince of Oxford, and Benjamin Cant of Colchester, and I certainly have never had a bad plant. I have always received full and courteous answers to all my questions from both these growers; and the only

thing you have to remember is to plant Prince's roses at the meeting of the stock and bud, and Cant's stock two inches below ground.

A good plan is to keep a notebook handy in the summer, and when you visit your neighbour's garden and see a good strong rose, dot down its name and situation.

All my roses are dwarfs.

I think myself it is no use attempting to grow certain delicate sorts, for an amateur only courts failure, unless you are satisfied with a very few perfect blooms.

Take for instance Comtesse de Nadaillac. I have had a prize bloom off a plant and perhaps half-a-dozen beautiful roses in the course of the summer, but six delicate plants take up a lot of room and crowd out some strong-growing variety yielding hundreds of blossoms.

Some say Madame de Watteville is a difficult rose to grow and very delicate. My plants are very strong and healthy, and flower freely with me. Certainly get it, bearing in mind that it wants extra covering in winter, a little extra manure, and very careful pruning.

The really strong growers I can recommend are the following:

How I Grew Them

1. *Marie Van Houtte* (T.).—Yellowy-white, with pinkish edges and good dark green foliage. The flowers come well formed, and I have always taken a prize with this variety. It grows tall and large, so must be in a bed with kindred spirits. You need not disbud it much, and you must not prune it hard.

2. *Francisca Kruger* (T.).—Also a bushy tall grower. Buff and yellow and peach. This rose must be disbudded unmercifully, or the flowers will not come out well. It makes a good bushy plant, and I only prune mine a little.

3. *Madame Lambard* (T.).—Pink and salmon-pink, and sometimes nearly white. A strong beautiful rose needing a lot of water.

4. *William Allan Richardson* (N.).—An orange rose which every one grows, but mine always come more orange than those of any one else. I prune it as I prune all my other roses, and it is a perfect mass of bloom. It makes a beautiful bed by itself, dwarf plants allowed to grow rather high. I never disbud it, but I cut all the bloom.

5. *Maman Cochet* (T.).—A queen of roses; palish pink with a long bud. This rose has no bad habits and possesses every

virtue. The first to bloom in spring and the last in autumn.

6. *Hon. Edith Gifford* (T.).—Very perfect white, with sometimes a pale pink centre. A very free bloomer, and a rose no garden can do without. Strong habits, and bushy but not high.

7. *Madame Charles* (T.).—A salmon-yellow; beautiful buds, a strong grower, and one of my favourites. Brown foliage, and one I do not disbud.

8. *La France* (H. T.).—Of course every one knows La France. It stands alone and unrivalled. You must not prune it hard, and it stands a lighter soil than the rest. Leave it a little to itself, for it likes its own way best.

9. *G. Nabonand* (T.).—Some say this is the best tea-rose of all, a little like Gloire de Dijon, but gentler and a better colour. It is very strong, never suffers from mildew, and grows high.

10. *Sunset* (T.).—A yellow tawny rose. In some places it grows yellower than in others; perhaps it fades a little in the sun. It is always covered with bloom and is very strong.

11. *Marquise Litta* (H. T.).—A splendid carmine-rose colour, and very large blooms. It grows on a strong upright stalk, and is

proud of its beauty. Every one asks its name, as a matter of course, on entering the rosary. Mine grows in the shade, and is apt to lose its leaves in the autumn.

12. *Captain Christy* (H. T.).—It is pale pink, with bluish full foliage. It suffers from mildew, but that we must put up with. Some might, without much fear of contradiction, call it a vulgar rose (cries of "no"); but it is so good-looking that we forgive it its slightest fault. The climbing species of this rose does admirably on a trellis.

13. *Souvenir de S. A. Prince* (T.).—A strong, flourishing, high-growing rose, covered with hundreds of pure white blooms, finishes my baker's dozen of strong roses. At least those I have found strong, though some others have done as well with me. For instance—

14. *Viscountess Folkestone* (H. T.).—A big, loose, flesh-white rose. Sometimes it grows as large as a big peony. It wants brave disbudding.

15. *Camoens* (H. T.).—A lovely pink rose, and a comfort to mix with the white ones. This is a low bushy rose, useful in autumn, and requires disbudding.

16. *Anna Olivier* (T.).—This rose could come in the first half-dozen. It is flesh-

pink and white, and has a long beautiful bud and dark green foliage. A strong grower and stands a little shade. I never bisbud mine, and I have had huge blooms off it. Some folks say this is the best tea-rose of all.

17. *Princess de Sagan* (T.).—A dark red, rather single, rose. Very small, but numberless blooms. I have often done the whole dinner-table with this rose. Useful for cutting.

18. *Madame Hoste* (T.).—This is one of the most beautiful of yellowish-white tea-roses. I think in the bud it is best. It is not a very free bloomer, but my plants are in the shade. It wants a rich soil.

19. *Madame de Watteville* (T.).—A very lovely rose, whitish, with bright pink edges to the petals. It wants covering well in winter, and pruning hard. You must thin the buds well. It is rather a weak grower, but it is a rose I love, and grows well in the Garden of Peace.

20. *Grace Darling* (H. T.).—A pink rose, and . . . . yes, I do like it. Some people rave about this rose, but I hardly know why, for it loses its leaves and is apt to annoy the rose-grower; but perhaps the fault lies with me.

21. *Madame Cusin* (T.).—This is a mauvish-pink rose, each petal deeper tip-tinted, but it mildews badly and is not very satisfactory. It requires a great deal of disbudding.

22. *Beauté Inconstante* (T.).—A red-orange rose. Oh! such a colour . . . . sometimes. But inconstant—naturally, according to its name. Rather a weak grower, but one bloom will repay the growth.

23. *Innocente Pirola* (T.).—A very perfect-shaped white rose. A little liable to mildew, and it likes a rich soil.

24. *Etoile de Lyon* (T.).—Such a beautiful yellow rose! One of my best; but then others find it difficult to grow. You must disbud it very hard. It has lovely brown foliage, and in dry weather is most satisfactory. But sometimes it will not open its buds. I should call it an obstinate rose.

25. *Jean Ducher* (T.).—A yellow tawny rose with apricot-colour centre. A very large flower and strong grower.

26. *Doctor Grill* (T.).—This is a weak grower, but such a pretty rose! Pale pink, and yellow, and rose-colour smallish flowers Not a show rose, but one I would not be without.

27. *Corinna* (T.).—A pale flesh-pink

rose, with deeper rose centre. Blooms generously and is strong.

28. *Luciole* (T.).—A large long bud. Strong rose, with red stiff stalk. The colour is yellowy-pink, like so many teas. The books call it a buttonhole rose, and I do not agree with them!

29. *Perle des Jardins.*—A really yellow rose, and a free bloomer, especially in autumn. Some folks abuse this rose for bad habits, but I love it.

30. *Kaiserinn Augusta Victoria* (H. T.). —A splendid rose and strong. White, shaded lemon.

31. *Mrs. W. J. Grant* (H. T.).—A new rosy-pink rose which I have just planted, for it is so strongly recommended. A free grower. Flowers on a strong stalk.

32. *Medea* (T.).—Another white one with a pale canary centre. It is strong and a good show rose. It does not do so very well with me.

33. *Prince Arthur* (H. P.).—The best dark red rose. A hybrid, and therefore, of course, it gets red rust and loses its leaves, but one *must* have dark red roses to show off the others.

34. *Prince Camille de Rohan* (H. P.).— The darkest rose there is, but a poor grower.

35. *Duke of Edinburgh* (H. P.).—A very bright red rose, certainly first-rate and grows well.

36. *Fisher Holmes* (H. P.).—Another beautiful dark crimson. Very like Prince Arthur. All these dark roses bloom again late in the autumn.

These are all the roses I have *at present*. My rosary is full, and I can plant no more in it. But I change my roses sometimes; and if I get a weak grower, I weed it out and send for a beautiful new one. It is much the best plan.

Some roses grow well in particular gardens. Find out what grows best in yours. Perhaps Madame de Watteville will die with you. Perhaps you will be able to grow Ernest Metz and Catherine Mermet when I cannot. But these two latter, though beautiful prize roses, are not much good to the amateur.

CHAPTER II

ON ARRANGEMENT OF BEDS

In this book you will find a plan of my rose garden. It is entirely circled with trees and shrubs, and therefore perhaps we suffer from mildew (or at least we ought to) more than our neighbours. But I do not think we do. Shelter is absolutely necessary, but in making a new rose garden do not plant trees too close.

Always group several plants of one sort together. This is a great secret of success. I never plant less than six of one sort, and often eight. They look so much better, and when you come to pick them you can have big bowls of separate kinds, which is always a joy.

I plant my roses rather close together, and I turn a deaf ear to all who say I do wrong!

Mine are two feet apart and one foot from the edge. Always make your beds

wide enough to enable you to plant your roses opposite each other in parallel lines, for if you plant them alternately you will have so much bare earth visible.

On each side of my sundial I have two round beds, in one William Allan Richardson and in the other Francisca Kruger. All grown rather high. Eight plants of each kind.

Then I have four beds in that circle of dark red hybrid perpetuals.

And then the next circle is nearly all tea-roses.

Find out what are the strong growers, or you will not have uniformity.

For instance, you can put Etoile de Lyon, La France, and Marie van Houtte together, as I have said. Madame Charles, Viscountess Folkestone, and Madame Lambard make a good bed.

Madame Hoste and Princess de Sagan look well together. And I should recommend a big bed of Souvenir de S. A. Prince (white) and Maman Cochet (pink).

Never be tempted under any circumstances to plant other flowers in your rosary. Roses must be alone in their glory. They are haughty, and will only mix with their fellows.

And when you are advised to let the shoots grow long and then to peg them down, do not yield; it does not answer. For a year or two it may look well, but it spoils the plants and is a mistake.

It is not the colours you must group, but habits you must consider in your arrangement, or you will spoil the effect.

Corinna and Innocente Pirola would go well together; Madame de Watteville and the Hon. Edith Gifford.

Only trust a rose when you have seen it grow well. Alas! catalogues mislead us frightfully, though one of the happiest moments of the year is when the new rose catalogue comes, and we make out a new list.

Some people will tell you to put standard and dwarfs together. This is not my advice. I should say that standards were more difficult for the amateur to manage well, and you can never pick roses off a standard in the way you can pick them off a dwarf. There is only one standard in the Garden of Peace, planted over a loved dog's grave, but it has not done well.

When the roses are planted, get the neat zinc labels on stems, price two and

six, or three shillings a dozen. You can get them from any rose-grower, but I get mine from Mr. J. Pinches, 3 Crown Buildings, Crown Street, Camberwell, S.E.

CHAPTER III

SOIL

If your roses are to grow in such a manner as to give you all the joy and pleasure that the rosary should give to the rosarian, it is obviously necessary that they should grow in soil that they like, and the first point you must consider is whether the soil in your garden is suitable, and if not, how the fault can be remedied.

Every one will tell you that a rose must be grown in loam, and the first question which the inexperienced gardener must ask in reply is, "What is loam?"

We all know what is meant by the words "sand" and "clay." These two words convey to us at once a description of the two soils most opposed in their nature which we find in our fields and gardens.

Loam is that kind of soil which is neither sand or clay. As it approaches in lightness to the nature of sand, it is called "sandy

loam" or "light loam," and as it approaches in nature to clay it is called "clayey loam" or "heavy loam."

The loam which we should try to get for our roses should be neither too light nor too heavy; it should be of a buttery disposition and yellow in colour. This is what may be called the perfection of soil, but, like perfection, it is often impossible to obtain; and we must therefore fall back on what we have or what we can get, bearing in mind this general principle, that tea-roses do not require such a heavy soil as do the hybrid perpetuals.

Remember that fresh soil properly prepared is far better for roses than the old soil of our gardens, and the question will be reduced to a matter of £ *s.* *d.* as to whether you will import fresh soil or no.

If you decide to keep the old, all that is necessary is to trench it, and manure it well to a depth of at least two feet. This work should all be finished by the end of August, in order that the manure may become well decomposed and the soil sink to its proper level before the time of planting.

If, however, it be decided that new soil is wanted, then a heap should be made in the following way:

The best soil is that of a loamy nature,

as described above, taken from meadow land. Do not dig deep into the meadow, but be content with the top spit. This is not only the richer soil, but as it contains the turf and fibres of the turf roots, it is far more suitable for garden work of all kinds than that which is only pure soil.

The pile of soil which you are now to build up should be composed in the following proportions: three loads of loam to one of manure. The best manner of mixing it is to build a pile in layers, first a layer of loam, then a layer of manure, and so on. In this way, when you remove your soil to the beds, it will become properly mixed; and should you not be able to get all your loam from one place, you will, by cutting down vertically into your pile, ensure that each bed is made up of the same loam, the layers of different loam being all removed, and consequently mixed, at the same time.

The size of the pile will, of course, depend on the number and size of your beds; these you must dig out to a depth of two feet, and note that a load is, roughly speaking, a cubic yard.

When should the pile be made? Not later than April if possible. For though I have made it as late as the end of July,

with success, it was only because I happened to be favoured with good weather, and it was a late planting season.

One last word of good advice: Choose dry weather for the work.

CHAPTER IV

ON FILLING IN THE BEDS

In all moving of soil, it is better, when possible, to consult not only the almanack, but also the barometer. For it is of the very greatest importance that the work of filling in the rose-beds should be done in dry weather. If the weather be wet, the soil is sure to get clogged, and the roots of the roses will not spread properly nor the plants thrive.

I have been forced sometimes to take up roses that had been planted in soil that had been moved in wet weather.

The work, too, is much more easily performed in the dry than in the wet. Nothing is so distressing to the owner of a garden as to see his nice gravel paths cut up and ruined irretrievably by the wheels of countless barrows, when the paths are soft.

If, then, the weather be fine and dry, the proper time to fill in your beds is

September, and the earlier you can do it the better.

I say September because, although you will not plant your roses until November, it is in the highest degree essential that the new soil should settle down well before the roses are planted. Of course this settling may be helped by treading the soil, but treading is a bad thing, and should only be resorted to in the last extremity.

Take out your old soil to a depth of two feet, and break up the bottom, then set to work to fill in. Cut down your pile vertically and break up any very large lumps.

When filling in, it is as well to sprinkle some sharp sand into the bed in order to help the roots to spread, and this should be done in the proportion of one barrowfull of sand to ten of soil.

Take great care throughout the whole of the filling in not to tread the beds more than is absolutely necessary. No man should get into the hole to smooth the soil if it can be done without. A bed made up in this manner, two feet deep, will in time sink about two inches, so it will be necessary to fill the beds about two inches above the required level.

The beds being full, they must be left

quite alone until the time of planting. All that the gardener has to do now is to sweep and tidy up round the beds, removing all signs of the recent work.

Supposing, however, that the pile of soil and manure has been made up very late in the summer; then in order that the turfs may be thoroughly well rotted, it will be necessary to defer the filling in of the beds until the latest possible date, say October. Perhaps even then it will be found that the turf at the outside of the pile is not well rotted; if this be so, then skin your pile, that is, take off the outside edges first, and put them at the bottom of your beds; then by the time the roots of the roses reach the bottom, the soil will be in good order.

CHAPTER V

ON PLANTING

CHOOSE dry weather if possible for planting, in November.

As I have said, I always order my roses directly the catalogues arrive, and then in November, when everything is quite ready, I send word to the rose-grower to send off my plants if they are fit for moving.

Before the roses come, make out a plan on paper where every rose is to go, and measure out your beds.

Have a lot of short stakes cut, and one stick the exact length from the edge of the bed to where the stem of each rose is to be, and one stick the exact length from rose to rose. The planting itself must be done as quickly as possible. So when careful measurements have been taken a short stake is put in the ground at each point.

Our roses are always unpacked in the stable, and one lot of a kind taken out at a time. The rest are well covered with rugs.

Then those ready for use are wrapped up in damp matting, so that the air does not penetrate, and carried to the rosary.

Then a hole is dug, and one rose taken from the matting and placed in the hole. A stick is put across the hole to get the level of the bed, and the point on the stem where it has previously been planted is held by one hand level with the stick. If the hole is too deep fill it in a little. Then with the other hand spread out very carefully all the roots of the rose. Do not let any roots cross each other or be doubled up, and see that none of them rest on manure. Then sprinkle a little fine earth over the roots, seeing they all keep in place, and gradually fill in the soil. When the hole is nearly full tread gently round the stem, and then fill up with soil again. Let it be friable on the top.

Mr. Benjamin Cant, I see, advises dipping the roots in water before planting. This may be necessary if they are very dry.

If the plants arrive during hard frost they may remain for three or even four days without being unpacked, if well covered up. And if the planting has to be delayed for some time, they may be unpacked and put in by their heels in a hole

in the kitchen garden; but we have never done this ourselves.

When your six of a kind are planted, then fetch another six, and so on until your rosary is full. But remember you must never let your plants lie on the ground uncovered, for a breath of cold wind might kill the delicate fibrous roots.

These fibrous roots, like little fine hairs, are the growing roots, and when you do not see them on a plant you cannot have much hope for your rose.

CHAPTER VI

ON PRUNING

It is impossible in an amateur book of this sort to write a scientific chapter on the art of rose pruning.

A few good lessons taught me all I know, and I never let any one touch my roses now. I think every year I do them I learn more by experience; and the vicar of our parish, who is a good rose-grower, walks round and shows me my mistakes.

I do not prune for show, but for quantity and bloom.

There are certain points to remember, and then, with experience for your teacher, you will not go far wrong.

1. Strong growers do not require such hard pruning as weak growers.

2. Find out by the aid of different books, or from gardeners and rose-growers, what roses do not like the knife, and make a note in your rose memorandum-book.

3. Get a strong pair of good pruning

scissors, worked with a spring—(a woman can never make a clean cut, and she seldom has a sharp knife!)—and a pair of gloves.

4. Do not prune in autumn.

5. Prune wall-roses in February, hybrid perpetuals in March, and tea-roses the second week in April.

Of course you would not prune in hard frost. Choose warm days for the work.

First cut out all dead wood; then weak wood—that is, poor, thin-looking twigs. And when this is done just meditate a while on the shape of your plant, and make up your mind what to take and what to leave.

Clear away the middle well, so as to let the air into the plant, and do not let any shoots cross each other: they will never grow well if they do. I cut my hybrid perpetuals down to four buds, as a rule, and my teas to five buds. But my delicate weak-growing teas I cut down even lower than that.

I remember one dreadful cold winter Jack Frost did all the pruning for me, and I had to cut all my plants down to the ground. I mourned over them and thought them dead, but that summer they were all more beautiful than ever, and I think out of a gross of roses we did not lose one.

When the pruning of the plant is finished, it is well to rub off any eye which points inwards, for it will only crowd the rose; and you must always prune just above an outward bud. But late frosts come, and the tea-roses often have to be pruned a second time.

It pained me to prune when I began rose-growing, but now I know it is much better to leave too few shoots than too many, and this is a point upon which I think every one will agree.

Suckers must all be cut off directly they appear. You will be able to see at once that they are briars and do not belong to the true rose, but they sap its strength and ought not to remain in the bed a day.

CHAPTER VII

ON CATERPILLARS AND CULTURE

WHEN May comes you must spend all your spare minutes walking round and round your rosary looking for caterpillars. A curled leaf will betray the enemy, or a hole in the leaf. There is nothing for it! Be brave! squash it you must between your finger and thumb, and try and think of something else the while!

It is a good plan to pick the leaf if it is curled, for in looking over the plant again you may waste time in searching for an enemy long since slain. Do not squash the caterpillars on the plant, for that injures the leaves. Sometimes I enlist a friend in the service, but when the roses are not your own you cannot stand the squashing process! Now and then I have paid my household so much a dozen: this, I think, is the best plan of all; then somebody benefits.

Get rid of the caterpillars you must; it

is a fatal thing to leave them; they destroy all the leaves and buds if allowed to live unmolested.

Green fly is another rose plague. For this it is best to have an aphis brush (price one and fourpence at the Stores). It will save your fingers, and do more work in five minutes than you could do in an hour.

Mildew can only be met by prompt measures. Directly you see it, sprinkle it (after a shower, or after watering) with flour of sulphur or tobacco-powder. I keep one or the other in a small flour-dredger always at hand.

Nothing really cures mildew when once it gets hold of a bed of roses, but you can keep it in check, and, if attacked at the very first sign, it may be destroyed.

Red rust comes later in the summer, but I know of no cure for that. It makes the leaves fall off, and gives a shabby appearance to the plant, but I do not think it does any permanent harm.

The great thing is to try and keep your roses in good health, and not to overfeed those which are weak and sadly.

One secret is to keep your plants well syringed in the summer, with soft water, or water that has stood in the sun; and do this when the sun is off your rosary.

This keeps the plants clean and fresh, and wards off the ills that roses are heir to.

The culture of roses consists mostly in hoeing the beds well in the summer. This ought to be done always after rain; and every time my rosary is watered I have the earth well hoed the next day. The top surface ought to be kept fine and smooth with the rake.

After a time, too, beds sink, if they have been newly made, and must have some more good loam put on to them to keep them up to the proper level; and sometimes after hoeing the earth covers the stock too much, and must be removed.

I have tried to say which of my roses require much disbudding. This must be done with judgment and care. On the hybrid perpetuals, when three roses grow on one stalk, it is far the best plan to remove the two smallest buds; for if you let all three grow, the stalks will be too short for cutting and the blooms small. I never leave more than one bud on a whole shoot of Etoile de Lyon, for instance, for they will not come out if you do; and every day as I walk round my rosary, I pluck a bud here and a bud there, for I know they cannot all flower well. Experience will teach you what roses you must treat in this way.

My Roses

After the bracken has been removed in April the ground must be exposed to the sun's rays for a month or two. Any straw that remains from the manure which was put on in the autumn should be taken away. Each bed must be well and carefully hoed to let in the air, and raked to get the surface fine.

Beds which have been planted a few years undoubtedly require a little more stimulant, and a top-dressing of good manure in May will be beneficial.

The fact is you must lovingly *watch* a rose garden day by day. You must never leave it without your care. Suckers seem to spring up in the night, or mildew attacks a favourite rose before you have time to turn round.

CHAPTER VIII

ON WATERING

In ordinary years, and in ordinary soils, it will not be found necessary to water roses at all; but it does occasionally happen that a dry spring, or a hot dry soil, forces us to give our plants the proper amount of liquid.

I make it a habit to look occasionally at the labels, for by pulling them up and seeing whether the stick of the label be wet or dry, I can easily see whether the beds are sufficiently moist.

In all watering we must bear in mind that we cannot possibly give too much; for an inch of water suddenly applied is nothing like so beneficial as half the amount falling from the sky in twenty-four hours.

An inch of rain means about five gallons to the square yard. It is not easy to guess how much water one is applying, so I make it a regular rule that my roses are to have one big watering-can, which holds three gallons, to every two plants; so that

to water one of my beds which contains twelve roses, six large cans-full, or eighteen gallons, are needed.

The water should not be applied quite close to the stem, but rather at a little distance; in my own beds the water is poured on halfway between the plants, and round them at the same distance.

Once begun, the watering must be continued until rain falls, and should be given as often as possible, at the least not less than once a week.

All this means a good deal of work and a good supply of water; and if it cannot be done, some sort of mulch must be resorted to instead. I have found the driest of soils keep damp when it has been mulched, and undoubtedly if the appearance of a mulch is not objected to, it is in every way most desirable; few people, however, care to see their beds covered in the summer-time with litter, and cocoanut fibre may be too expensive, and to my mind it does not look very nice.

Roses, however, are not strict teetotalers: much as they like and require water, they do at times want something stronger. Though much good is done in this way by the top dressing of good manure, applied as I have before said, a

certain amount of the valuable qualities of the dressing, as a food, is most certainly lost. In May, therefore, and early summer it is a good thing to give the plants some manure water, but it must be remembered that this should not be given after June.

There is another point to be remembered, more important perhaps than anything else in the whole culture of the rose; this is, that manure water must never be applied when the soil is dry and the plants are thirsty. The reason for this is obvious. A plant can with benefit to itself only draw up a certain amount of stimulant at a time; if it should be so thirsty that it draws up too much at once, the effect on its digestion will most certainly be very disastrous. Wait, therefore, until the rain has fallen before you apply your manure water, and if the rain should not fall, do not apply any at all.

Another important point to bear in mind is that the stimulant should not be too strong. The easiest way to make manure water is to put a bag of cow or horse manure and some soot into a half-barrel of water and leave it there until the water is well impregnated. Then take out as much liquid as required, and dilute it in another vessel until it be a light tea-colour.

If the drainage water from the house be not too strong, and is easily got at, it will be as good as anything else; but as the strength of such water varies in every house, experience only can tell whether or not it should be diluted before use.

If you will always bear in mind that you must give your stimulant weak, and give it in wet weather, and never to your weakly plants, you will not go wrong.

CHAPTER IX

ON EXHIBITION

THOSE who take the first prizes at rose shows (so I am told) only allow one shoot on the rose-tree, and only one bud on that one shoot; and they water the plant with hot water if it is cold weather, and cold water if it is hot weather. Then they hide the blooms in a cellar to keep their colour, and sit up all night curling the leaves.

I do nothing of this sort! Why should I? Nature herself perfects the blooms grown in the Garden of Peace.

The boxes I get ready the day before the show. They are ordinary exhibition boxes, with little tubes in them. I cover the whole of the surface with long damp moss, arranged carefully with all the green of the moss level and perfect. At the bottom of each tube I put a round piece of raw potato; then I fill the tube with very wet moss.

The only way I sacrifice myself is by

getting up about four or five o'clock on the morning of the show, and picking all the best blooms with the dew on them. These I put in water in a dark room, and . . . return to bed.

After breakfast the real work of the day begins. Ready on the table lie the boxes, and a bundle of little fine sticks pointed at one end, and some green crewel.

Then I pick out my best roses. No easy task this, for what I call my best rose a judge might discard. Some judges, I feel sure, give marks for size and some for shape, so you must just take your chance.

Carefully tie your rose-stem at the bottom and top, very neatly, to a stick, and then stand the stick in its tube, pressing the end firmly into the potato. You may only have the green that belongs to your rose, you may never add any extra leaves. Let your rose stand well out of the moss, and mind that it holds up its head.

Do not pick those for exhibition which are too full blown: they always come out in a hot tent.

Do not choose roses which are rather single in their petals, such as Doctor Grill, William Allan Richardson, or Princess de Sagan. Madame de Watteville is a great show rose, and Marie van Houtte. For

your six roses put, with these last two I have named, Maman Cochet, Souvenir de S. A. Prince (if you have a big one), Etoile de Lyon (if it has come out well), and the Hon. Edith Gifford.

You must be careful that your show roses have not a divided heart or double centre. If you examine your roses you will soon see what I mean.

And also be careful that you consult your catalogues, and do not put hybrid teas amongst your tea-roses.

You must have some cards ready the proper size, with the names neatly printed on them, and these must be put under each rose, securely fastened into the wood through the moss with a long pin.

I never take my roses to the hot tents too early, and I always carry a basket of extra roses with me in case some might fail on the way.

If you follow out all my plain advice, doubtless you will take prizes as I do!

CHAPTER X

WINTER

"GOOD-BYE, summer. Good-bye, good-bye!"

As the leaves fall, our hearts are heavy. We feel the cold of winter as the roses feel it, but we cannot slumber in the earth till spring wakens us . . . at least not yet.

But away with sentiment! let us think only of next year's roses, and of the sun which is shining behind the clouds.

The one thing to be carefully remembered is that tea-roses must be covered up in winter. First top-dress all the beds with heavy farm-yard manure. Then we always cover all our beds with bracken, and sprinkle the actual plants with the fern as well. This ought to be done before very severe weather sets in, but not until there are signs of a hard frost. We stack our bracken ready in November near at hand, and when it is cold we shelter our beloved plants.

This is not removed until the following April, when pruning begins.

You must also see in winter that the earth is firm and close up round the stems; for sometimes, if the weather is rough and your roses be much blown about, a hole is worn round the stems, and into this hole the frost penetrates and snow accumulates, and the plant is killed.

If the position of your rosary is very exposed, it is best to put hurdles round some of the weakest roses, but under these circumstances it is courting failure to grow weak roses at all. It is only a waste of labour and money.

"Everywhere are roses, roses." Ah! yes, all flowers are beautiful, but who will deny that the rose is the queen of flowers?

When Jack Frost takes the reins of government into his own hands and the rime covers the trees, it comforts my heart to feel that my roses are tucked up cosily in their beds in the rosary. No cold can reach their tender roots, and they are sheltered from the rude blast.

In the verandah all the titmice and nuthatches feed on hemp seed, robins and blackbirds and thrushes come for food, bullfinches spoil the mespilus-trees, and crossbills light on the firs. The pampas grass gracefully bends to the breeze. At last the year has turned, and the heart of

spring will soon be heard throbbing—throbbing.

In the Garden of Peace we stand waiting. There can be summer in our hearts without flowers; but there can be no summer in a garden without roses!

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